

Section 6

MASTER PARKS IMPROVEMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this section are designed to provide equitable service across the City, recognizing geographic as well as population density needs. To do that, Grinnell needs to:

- Renovate and upgrade existing neighborhood parks and community parks and acquire and develop new parks to reach equity.
- Acquire and/or develop neighborhood parks and community parks to serve newly developing residential areas.
- Provide financial strategies to address capital funding requirements.
- Establish a joint use agreement with the school district to enable Fairview Elementary School grounds to be used as a park for that neighborhood when not needed for school functions, alleviating a lack of neighborhood park facilities in that neighborhood.

Results of work activities conducted as part of the park system planning process described in the preceding sections of this report provide the basis for the recommended implementation program. The background information provides the foundation of the plan policies that in turn set the direction of the implementation program.

Grinnell Parks and Recreation Board

The City of Grinnell currently has two separate entities, a Park Board and a Recreation Board, that are responsible for parks and recreation facilities and activities in Grinnell. Most local governments combine the two responsibilities under a single Park and Recreation Board because they are closely related and dependent on one another. Grinnell should do the same.

The newly constituted Grinnell Park and Recreation Board should be responsible for making recommendations to the City Council regarding the City's park and recreation system. The primary role of the Board should be to:

- Provide recommendations to the City Council regarding provisions for parks, greenways/trails, special use areas, sports complexes, and natural resource areas that are components of the *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan*.
- Guide new park development proposed in the *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan*.
- Research and provide input to the City Council regarding alternate sources of revenue to finance park facilities.
- Provide an annual review of the park programs and the City's progress in implementing the *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan* to the City Council.
- Provide five-year updates of the *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan* to the City Council to account for progress made and to amend the plan in response to changing circumstances.

The *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan* that follows is presented in two parts. The first part discusses park and recreation facilities policy recommendations and presents a Master Plan illustrating the recommendations. The second part presents an Action Plan for implementing the recommendations made in the first part.

PART I: PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

Part I deals with three topics. The first is **Park Development Policy Recommendations**, encompassing park facility categories, park size guidelines, land acquisition, park street frontage, pedestrian accommodations, intergovernmental coordination, and maintenance.

The second topic is **Park Facility Needs and Locations**, discussing the primary components of the park and recreation system, and improvements to meet the existing and future demands of the park and recreation system.

The third topic presents the **Grinnell Parks Master Plan** and describes its specific elements in greater detail.

Park Development Policy Recommendations

Park Facility Categories. The City should determine park distribution geographically, so all residents are within walking distance of a park and recreation facility. Six park classifications are established for the parks system.

- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Special Use Facilities
- Sports Complexes
- Natural Resource Areas
- Greenways/Trails

A detailed breakdown of recommendations according to proposed classifications of all existing and proposed parks is provided later in this section of the report. *Figure 6.1: Existing and Proposed Park Facilities* on the following page shows both park facility categories/classifications and acreages for existing and proposed neighborhood parks, community parks, special use facilities, and natural resource areas. (Although greenways, trails, and green streets are proposed, they are not included in the following table.)

Park Size Guidelines. The Master Plan policies include guidelines for park size so the nine park classifications can provide suitable recreational opportunities to Grinnell residents. The Master Plan policies were based on community input, the existing park and recreation system, and National Recreation and Park Association guidelines. Specific size guidelines were developed for neighborhood parks, community parks, and sports complexes.

- Neighborhood parks - 5 to 10 acres
- Community parks – Usually 30 to 50 acres
- Sports complexes – Greater than 25 acres

Park sites may serve multiple park classification roles (e.g., both a neighborhood park and community park) by virtue of having sufficient size and the variety of improvements to fulfill both functions. Size guidelines were not developed for special use facilities, natural resource areas, and greenways/trails because of their unique character.

Existing Neighborhood Parks	Acreage
Bailey Park	4.0
Jaycees Park	5.2
Merrill Park	8.7
Thomazin Park	2.7
Van Horn Park	8.2
Proposed Neighborhood Parks *	Acreage *
Northeast Park	9.0
North Park	10.0
Northwest Park (neighborhood park acreage) **	10.0
West Park	7.5
Southwest Park	10.0
Neighborhood Park Total	75.3
Existing Community Parks	Acreage
Central Park ***	3.8
Miller Park ***	22.3
Proposed Community Park *	Acreage*
Northwest Park (community park acreage) **	30.0
Community Park Total	56.1
Existing Natural Resource Area	Acreage
Arbor Lake Park	81.4
Proposed Natural Resource Area	Acreage
None	0.0
Natural Resource Area Total	81.4
Existing Special Use Area	Acreage
Outdoor Pool	3.3
Lions Park	2.6
Waterworks Park	0.6
Proposed Special Use Areas	Acreage
None	0.0
Special Use Areas Total	6.5
TOTAL PARK ACREAGE	219.3
<p>* Proposed Neighborhood and Community Parks acreages are approximate.</p> <p>** Proposed Northwest Park is both a Neighborhood and Community Park. Acreages for the Neighborhood and Community Park portions of the proposed park are separated.</p> <p>*** Central and Miller Parks also serve as Neighborhood Parks.</p>	

Figure 6.1: Existing and Proposed Park Facilities

Land Acquisition. Some of the recommendations in the *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan* will require the City to preserve additional land for future park development. While it may not be feasible for the City to acquire all the recommended parkland, the City should, at the least, examine ways to preserve these lands for public use. Preservation may take place through public and private partnerships, donations, and easements, along with other means. Policies and

procedures need to be adopted to ensure the City preserves only land actually needed for park and recreation purposes. The City should:

- Establish a strategy to preserve land in areas where the need exists or will exist in the future through purchase, lease purchase options, shared use agreements, gifts, easement, private ownership, or other means. The strategy should include sale of excess land to fund new acquisitions.
- Develop criteria to guide decisions on acquisition and disposal of parkland. Criteria should include acquisition of areas contiguous to existing park properties that will be beneficial to the park and the City, preservation of unique areas, suitability for specific use and community needs, the ability to provide public access, and suitability for development of parkland.
- Establish criteria for land to be dedicated so the City is not burdened with leftover parcels or areas unsuitable for development as parks. Require that zoning and pre-application meetings deal specifically with plans and needs for the area being platted, and that subdivision plans adhere to them.

Park Street Frontage. Ideally, all parks should have some amount of street frontage. For future park planning, a general guideline would be one full street frontage for mini-parks, one full street frontage for neighborhood parks, and two full street frontages for a community park. The goal shall be to make parks visible to residents and passer-bys, instead of hidden behind houses and other developments.

Pedestrian Accommodations. To make the ½ mile service area for neighborhood parks effective, accommodations need to be provided for pedestrians to safely travel to and from parks. Pedestrian accommodations include sidewalks, signage, and pedestrian activated signals where necessary. As pointed out in the *2004 Grinnell Comprehensive Plan*, the sidewalk system in Grinnell is incomplete. Gaps should be filled in and repairs made where necessary. Pedestrian activated signals should be provided in conjunction with the trail and/or street system in locations where there are known or anticipated pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Signage notifies both pedestrians and drivers of safe access routes to the park. The necessary accommodations are determined individually for each park and trail facility. Pedestrian accommodations within the service area of each park should be provided to allow safe access to and from the park.

Intergovernmental Coordination. The City should seek joint use agreements with the school district to ensure the public's ability to use selected school grounds and outdoor sports fields and courts when not needed for school use, and embrace opportunities to expand future cooperation for mutual benefit. The City should also coordinate with communities and counties in the region to plan and develop the regional trails proposed in the *Iowa Trails 2000* plan. And the City should work with Poweshiek County to acquire new County Conservation Board park holdings near Grinnell.

Maintenance Plan. The *Grinnell Master Parks Improvement Plan* proposes numerous improvements to existing parks and the addition of many more parks, greenways, and trails. One result of providing such a diverse park and recreation system are the extensive maintenance requirements.

The *Park Maintenance Standards*, a National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publication, has developed a maintenance system involving six maintenance modes. The system was described in Section 5 of this Report. Recommendations for designating maintenance modes for Grinnell's parks appear in *Figure 6.2: Recommended Maintenance Mode* on the following page.

	Acres	Maintenance Mode					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Existing Neighborhood Parks	28.8	0.0	0.0	28.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bailey Park	4.0			4.0			
Jaycees park	5.2			5.2			
Merrill Park	8.7			8.7			
Thomazin Park	2.7			2.7			
Van Horn Park	8.2			8.2			
Proposed Neighborhood Parks	46.5	0.0	0.0	46.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northeast Park	9.0			9.0			
North Park	10.0			10.0			
Northwest Park	10.0			10.0			
West Park	7.5			7.5			
Southwest Park	10.0			10.0			
Existing Community Parks	26.1	3.8	13.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.0
Central Park	3.8	3.8					
Miller Park	22.3		13.3				9.0
Proposed Community Park	30.0	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northwest Park	30.0		30.0				
Existing Natural Resource Area	81.4	0.0	0.0	9.5	2.5	0.0	69.4
Arbor Lake Park	81.4			9.5	2.5		69.4
Proposed Natural Resource Area	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
None	0.0		0.0				
Existing Special Use Areas	6.5	0.0	3.3	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Outdoor Pool	3.3		3.3				
Lions Park	2.6			2.6			
Waterworks Park	0.6			0.6			
Total Neighborhood, Community, Natural Resource Area and Special Use Area Acres	219.3	3.8	46.6	88.0	2.5	0.0	78.4
Greenways							
Same maint. mode for all greenways							X
Proposed Trails							
Same maint. mode for all trails				X			
Proposed Green Streets							
Same maint. mode for all green streets		X					

Figure 6.2: Recommended Maintenance Mode

Greenway Plan. Greenways and trails can serve both transportation and recreation functions. A greenway serves as a natural connection along a creek, drainageway, and/or vegetated corridor, and may function as a passive or active recreation corridor. Greenways can also enhance local conservation efforts by opening up and cleaning up creeks and drainageways, and by preserving and adding to open space within the city. Trails through these greenways can serve as off-street routes between parks, linking them together to form a unified park system.

To implement a policy to include greenways as part of the long range plan to improve Grinnell's park system will require actions on the part of the local government that will:

- Establish working relationships with Poweshiek County Conservation Board and other public entities to develop regional greenway and trail systems on land outside current corporate boundaries.
- Develop and adopt a Greenway Plan for the City of Grinnell and surrounding environs.
- Based on Greenway Plan recommendations, establish a municipal greenway ordinance to define greenways; designate greenways along waterways and other areas; develop greenway guidelines; determine methods of protection through easements, property acquisition, or other means; and provide equitable compensation to private landowners.
- Add provisions to the City of Grinnell municipal ordinance to require that future plats and subdivisions must allocate adequate space, as defined in the ordinance, for any greenway identified in the City's Greenway Plan that passes through the plat or subdivision.
- Utilize the state's "two-mile" provisions regarding subdivision and development outside current corporate boundaries to require preservation of land along existing waterways for use as greenways.

Green Street Plan. Grinnell would benefit from adopting a Green Street policy and implementing it over time. Doing so would ensure that the tree-lined streets remain part of the landscape throughout the city and extend to areas of future development. It would also help create a pedestrian and bike movement network through the city that would link parks and public open spaces together as a continuous, interconnected system. To implement a Green Streets policy in Grinnell will require the following actions on the part of the City of Grinnell:

- Develop and adopt a Green Street Plan that examines in greater detail the recommendations in this report.
- Based on recommendations in the Green Street Plan, establish a municipal Green Streets ordinance that describes Green Streets attributes, identifies streets to be designated as Green Streets, and establishes guidelines for retrofitting existing streets and designing new streets as Green Streets. (One topic that could be addressed in the guidelines, for example, is revising tree planting locations in tree lawns to be closer to the street in order to allow wider sidewalks that can double as off-street trails. This would be done over time as older, diseased, or damaged trees are replaced.)
- Add provisions to the City of Grinnell municipal ordinance to require that future plats and subdivisions allocate adequate space, as defined in the ordinance, for any Green Street identified in the City's Green Street Plan that passes through the plat or subdivision.

Park Facility Needs and Locations

Current and future park needs are outlined in the Master Plan policies that have been proposed as part of this park planning process. Meeting these needs will require:

- Improvements to existing parks. This will involve replacement or renovation of obsolete or run-down facilities in some parks.
- Improved access to parks in already developed neighborhoods. This means the City will need to fill in the gaps in its sidewalk network, and should install signalized crossings where access routes to parks (e.g. Green Streets) cross heavily traveled streets.
- Land acquisition for future parks. New parks will be needed to serve areas of future residential growth and development.

Existing and Proposed Parks. The Master Plan, *Figure 63: Grinnell Parks Master Plan – Existing & Proposed Park and Rec Facilities*, shows existing park facilities and proposed locations of new neighborhood parks, community parks, greenways/trails, and a new county park. These new parks are proposed, in addition to existing parks, to accommodate recent and future growth and serve existing residential areas outside current park service areas.

The proposed “ideal” locations for new parks were chosen based on the Master Plan policies. In particular, proposed new park locations are intended to satisfy policies 1.1 through 1.7 as well as the level of service and service area standards established in policy 2.2. These “ideal” park locations represent feasible park sites where they are shown on the Master Plan. They indicate where the City should begin its search for a new park site, and if nothing is available, the search should expand from the “ideal” location until a suitable site is found. It is important to note the “ideal” location could move.

In existing parks, all play equipment should be inspected and hazardous pieces repaired or replaced. Each park should also be inspected for ADA compliance, with shortcomings corrected as the park is renovated.

Special Use Areas and Natural Resources Areas. In addition to neighborhood and community parks, there are other recreation facilities that should accommodate the needs of residents. These include special use areas and natural resource areas. They are complementary to the successful functioning of the City’s neighborhood and community parks. The policy section of the Master Plan (see *Figure 5.1: Table of NRPA Park and Recreation Facility Attributes*) does not establish level of service standards for special use areas and natural resource areas. No new special use or natural resource areas are proposed.

Greenways/Trails. Within Grinnell’s corporate boundaries and on land adjacent to the city are several natural drainage systems that can and should be used to establish greenway and trail system networks. The City may not necessarily own a passive greenway (most of the drainageways in and near Grinnell are in private ownership) but the area should be protected by ordinance as a natural area. Active greenways may include unpaved paths or paved trails and would typically be owned by the City.

Proposed greenway and trail systems follow guidelines established in the Master Plan policies. They provide important connections to parks, recreation areas, schools, civic facilities and residential neighborhoods. Most of the proposed greenways include recreation trails. Greenways and trails will also provide connections to existing and proposed trails in the Grinnell vicinity.

Guidelines for greenways and trails are established in *Figure 5.2: Table of Park and Recreation Facility Components*. It should be the goal of the City to provide the required facilities and services where possible for greenways and trails.

Grinnell Parks Master Plan

The *Grinnell Parks Master Plan* is presented in *Figure 6.3: Grinnell Parks Master Plan – Existing & Proposed Park and Rec Facilities* and *Figure 6.4 Grinnell Parks Master Plan – Existing and Proposed Park Service Areas* on the following two pages. The Master Plan shows locations for new parks, recreation trails, Green Streets, and greenways. Each topic is discussed, in turn, in the pages following the two figures. The two figures also show that the proposed parks will put nearly all current and future residential areas within easy walking distance of a neighborhood park without having to cross an arterial street.

Also shown in the two figures is a large area south of Arbor Lake Park designated as a “Potential Regional Recreation Area.” Grinnell is within a few miles of Rock Creek State Park and the Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve in Jasper County. But Grinnell, Poweshiek County’s largest population center, does not have any nearby facilities operated by the Poweshiek County Conservation Board. The proposed regional recreation area would alleviate that shortage. Because detailed planning for such a park is beyond the scope of this report, it is only mentioned here as an opportunity for Grinnell, and Poweshiek and Jasper counties. Inclusion of the proposed facility could augment recreation and conservation efforts at the Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve and Rock Creek State Park. And its location adjacent to Arbor Lake Park would dedicate a large, contiguous tract of land for conservation and recreation as well as double as a community park for the southwest quadrant of Grinnell.

New Parks

The Master Plan (Figure 6.3) shows five new municipal parks to accommodate the need for neighborhood parks in areas where Grinnell is expected to see residential growth, and to alleviate the current and future shortage of community parks. A regional park is proposed south of Arbor Lake Park.

Four New Neighborhood Parks

1. Northeast Neighborhood Park
 - Park will alleviate neighborhood park shortage in existing neighborhood and provide a neighborhood park for future residential development
 - 9 acre tract bounded by Hobart and Penrose Streets and future 13th and 14th Avenues.
 - Lies within current Grinnell Corporate Limits
 - Nearly level, open site, currently used for crop production
 - Currently has full street frontage on Hobart and Penrose Streets; should have full frontage on future 13th or 14th Avenues
 - Tract is similar in shape to nearby Merrill Park
 - Longest branch of proposed Sugar Creek Greenway System begins on site
 - Tract is west across Penrose Street from Ahrens Park soccer fields
 - Future trails include Hobart and Penrose Green Streets and off-street trail along greenway
2. North Neighborhood Park
 - Park will provide a neighborhood park for future residential development

- 10 acre tract north of 13th Avenue and east of IA Hwy 146
 - Lies outside current Grinnell Corporate Limits
 - Tract is rolling terrain currently used for crop production Should have full street frontage on at least two future streets
 - Longest branch of proposed Sugar Creek Greenway System passes through site
 - Smaller branch of proposed Sugar Creek Greenway System branches off to northeast
 - Connected to future trail system by proposed off-street trail passing through park along greenway
3. West Neighborhood Park
- Park will provide a neighborhood park for future residential development
 - 7.5 acre tract on west side of Ferguson Road between 1st and 4th Avenues, bounded north and south by future 3rd and 2nd Avenues, respectively
 - Lies partially within current Grinnell Corporate Limits
 - Tract is gently rolling terrain currently used for crop production
 - Has full street frontage on 20th Street, needs full street frontage on at least one other side
 - Future trail along 20th St Green Street
4. Southwest Neighborhood Park
- Park will provide a neighborhood park for future residential development
 - 10 acre tract on east side of 20th Street and north side of future Garfield Avenue
 - Lies outside current Grinnell Corporate limits
 - Tract is mostly level terrain on top of ridge; south portion slopes gently to south
 - Has full street frontage on 20th Street; should be located so that it has full street frontage on future Garfield Avenue
 - Future trails include Green Streets along 20th Street and future Garfield Avenue

New Neighborhood/Community Park

Northwest Neighborhood/Community Park

- Park will address current shortage of community park land in the northwest quadrant of Grinnell, and will provide a neighborhood park for future residential development
- 40 acre tract north of 11th Avenue and east of 20th Street, bounded by 20th Street, and future Bliss Street, 12th and 15th Avenues
- Lies partially within current Grinnell Corporate Limits
- Tract is rolling terrain along branch of proposed Sugar Creek Greenway System, and includes two ponds
- Has full street frontage on 20th Street; needs full street frontage on at least one other side
- Future trails include 20th St Green Street and off-street trail along branch of proposed Sugar Creek Greenway System

New Regional Park

- 400+ acre regional park bounded by 20th Street on the west, Pinder Avenue on the south, commercial properties along IA Hwy 146 on the east, and line drawn along south boundary of Arbor Lake Park on the north
- Lies completely outside current Grinnell Corporate Limits
- Tract is rolling terrain currently used for crop production and pasture
- Sweetwater Creek (creek outlet from Arbor Lake) and two tributary streams flow through tract; two ponds located on tract

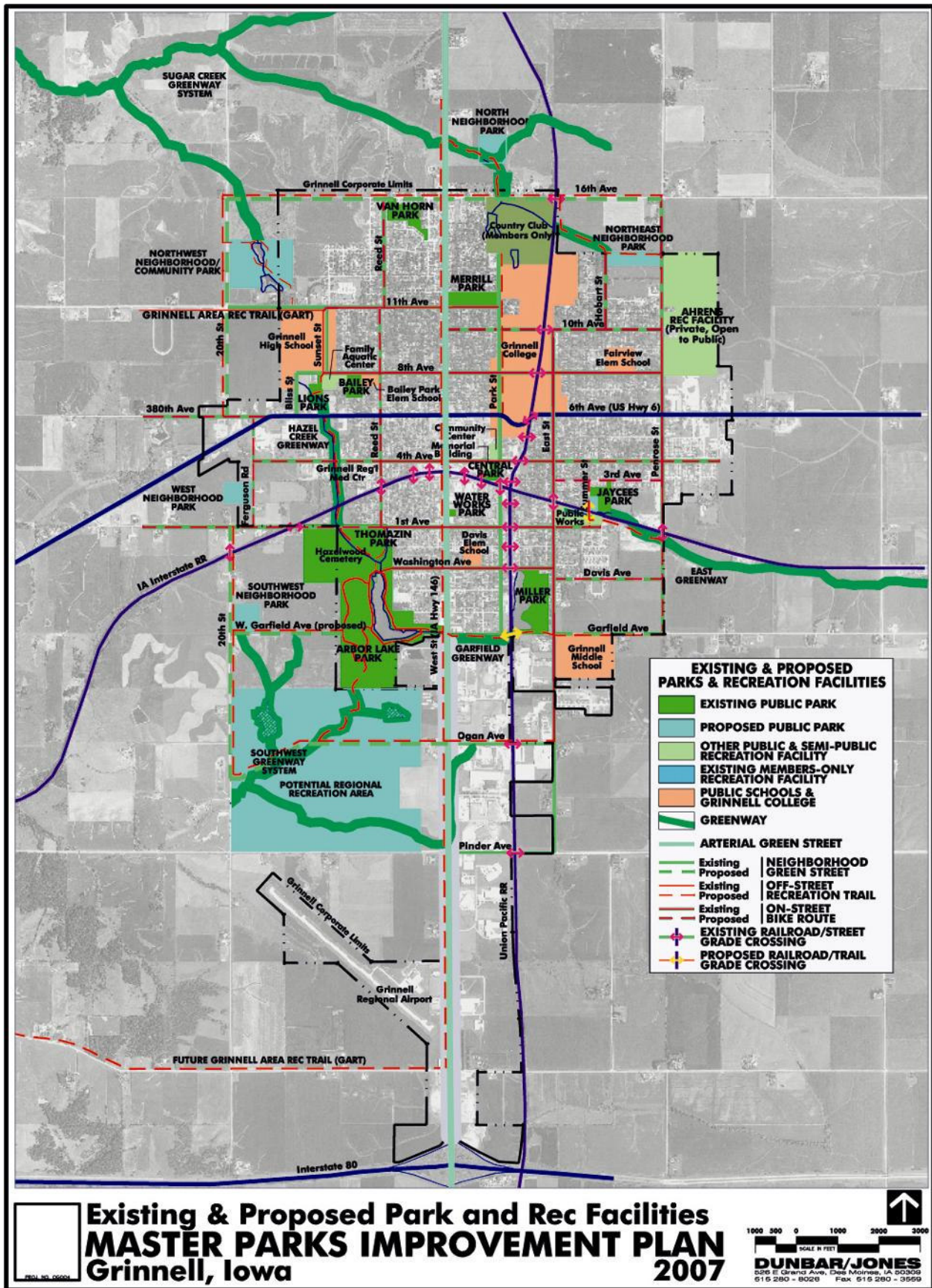


Figure 6.3: Grinnell Parks Master Plan – Existing & Proposed Park and Rec Facilities

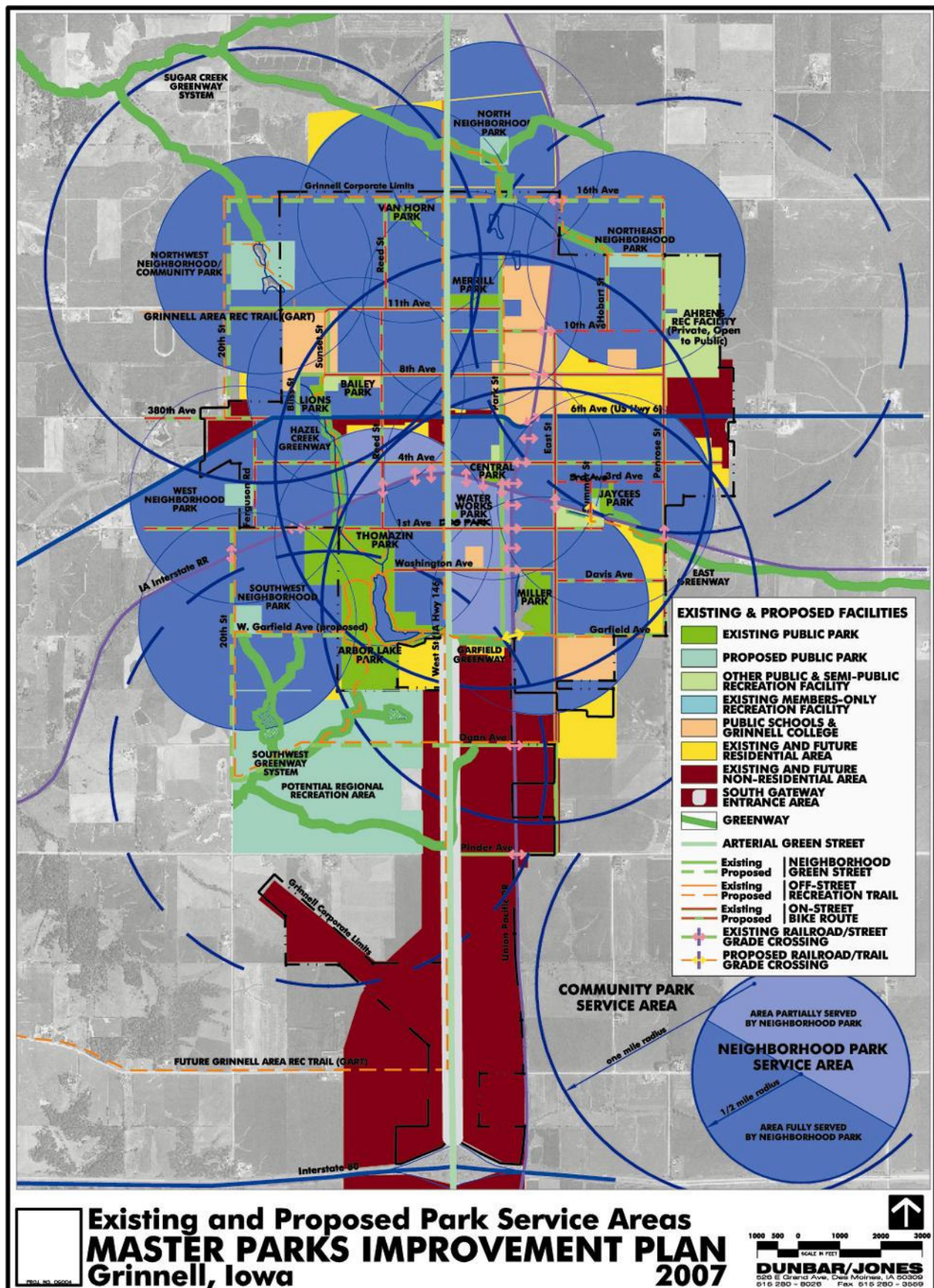


Figure 6.4: Grinnell Parks Master Plan – Existing & Proposed Park Service Areas

- Tract is east across road from sewer plant, north across road from airport, and adjoins south boundary of Arbor Lake Park
- Park is recommended to address regional park shortage in southwestern portion of Poweshiek County, near the county's largest population center
- Proposed park will accommodate interest in camping and other activities mentioned in community surveys that require larger, regional park facilities
- Park will help alleviate community park shortage in southwest quadrant of Grinnell

Changes to Existing Parks

It is important that each neighborhood and community park be equitably designed so that no neighborhood is perceived as being shortchanged or given preferential treatment. Doing so will require that new parks conform to guidelines presented in Section 5, and existing parks be upgraded to meet the guidelines. Exceptions should be rare. Adherence to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards should not be compromised. The following are descriptions of the major proposed facilities for each existing park.

Arbor Lake and Thomazin Parks

Arbor Lake Park

- Construct multi-use trail from Thomazin Park to connect with existing trail around Arbor Lake
- Redesign parking lot at west end of Washington Ave to accommodate additional parking
- Add parking lot west of north end of Arbor Lake, accessed through Hazelwood Cemetery drives
- Use limestone blocks to construct lake access points at several locations along lakeshore
- Replace existing play area with "Creative Playscape" facility
- Replace existing shelter/restroom structure
- Add natural amphitheater on hillside west of shelter/restroom
- Add lakeshore boardwalk promenade and pavilion equipped with concession facilities to rent paddleboats and canoes
- Restore/create prairie, riparian, and savanna habitat areas in western and southern portions of park
- Add mown paths to restored natural areas
- Construct accessible trail between Marvin Ave parking and east lakeshore
- Add photography blinds north and south of west sediment basin
- Add shelter/restroom structure on Arbor Lake dam
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.1: Arbor Lake and Thomazin Parks Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Thomazin Park

- Add parking lot with 15 or so stalls at north end of park
- Buffer parking lot from street with perennial gardens
- Add Creative Playscape facility
- Add shelter/restroom structure with composting toilets and rainwater collection
- Regrade southwest section of park to accommodate open play area
- Construct multi-use recreation trail through park north to south
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.1: Arbor Lake and Thomazin Parks Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Bailey Park

- Construct skate park on site of old tennis courts
- Close Prairie Street between elementary school and north half of park
- Add park/school entry plaza in closed portion of Prairie Street
- Add paved pavilion around existing shelter/restroom structure
- Construct shade trellis south of existing shelter/restroom structure
- Add head-in parking along 8th Avenue; extend head-in parking along south portion of Prairie Street
- Add perimeter walks around edges of park
- Add walks to interior of park
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.2: Bailey Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Central Park

- Relocate Memorial Building activities to remodeled Public Safety Building or other facility, so existing building can be removed from Central Park
- Construct a re-creation of Clark Memorial Fountain in its original location in the northwest corner of the park, and construct a plaza surrounding the fountain
- Add a handicap-accessible amphitheater and amphitheater plaza/stage north of existing gazebo
- Replace existing shelters with two shelter/restroom structures and one shelter structure
- Replace existing play equipment with a “Creative Play” area shaded by a tensile structure
- Enhance Farmers’ Market area with overhead trellises that can serve as concessionaire stalls
- Add splash pad water play feature
- Add head-in parking on all four sides of the park
- Add perimeter walks around edges of park, and reconfigure interior park walks
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.3: Central Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Jaycees Park

- Purchase 1.4-acre private property at southwest corner of Jaycees Park to expand park
- Replace existing shelter with a shelter/restroom structure
- Add an outdoor amphitheater space in the northern part of the newly-acquired property
- Add a shelter structure south of the new amphitheater
- Add parallel parking stalls along Summer Street and a parking lot southwest of the amphitheater
- Construct a “Natural Adventure” play area in the center of the park
- Add a walkway into the park from 3rd Ave through the north park panhandle
- Add a sidewalk along Summer Street from 3rd Ave south along entire length of park
- Construct walks in the interior of the park
- Regrade area along south creek to create a wetland
- Construct trail connection across Iowa Interstate Railroad right-of-way

- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.4: Jaycees Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Lions Park

- Designate as a trailhead for the Grinnell Area Rec Trail (G.A.R.T.)
- Add parking lot with 50 or so stalls to accommodate Family Aquatic Center patrons and G.A.R.T. users
- Add restrooms and shelters, and amenities such as bike racks and benches
- Add a “Creative Play” area shaded with a tensile structure
- Add areas for tent camping
- Work with Iowa Valley Community College to implement a Restoration and Natural Education area and nature walk
- Extend G.A.R.T. through park to Creative Play area
- Extend G.A.R.T. along creek south in future to south park boundary and through proposed greenway to connect with Arbor Lake Park trail system
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.5: Lions Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Merrill Park

- Remove existing softball diamond outfield fence to allow area for field games
- Improve softball diamond, dugouts, and bleachers
- Replace existing play equipment with a “Creative Play” area and tensile shade structure north of existing west shelter
- Construct new “Adventure/Natural Play” area west of Broad Street/Country Club Drive oval
- Add paved entry/gathering space around existing west shelter
- Add paved outdoor cooking area east of existing west shelter
- Develop Broad Street/Country Club Drive oval as a native forbs garden and sculpture display area
- Add restrooms and paved pavilion to existing east shelter
- Install a large perennial flower garden north of existing east shelter
- Add head-in parking along 11th Ave east of Broad Street and north part of Park St frontage
- Add perimeter walks along West and Park Streets and 11th Avenue
- Add walks to interior of park
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.6: Merrill Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Miller Park

- Replace existing play equipment in north section of park with “Creative Play” area shaded by tensile structure
- Replace existing play equipment in south section of park with “Creative Play” area shaded with tensile structure west of existing shelter/restroom
- Add new shelter/restroom structure to north section of park west of parking turn-around area
- Replace existing play equipment in north section of park with “Creative Play” area shaded by tensile structure

- Replace three picnic shelters in north section of park with two new shelters
- Reconstruct north park road to add head-in parking stalls
- Add large flower garden in north section of park
- Add sidewalk along Washington Ave park frontage
- Reconfigure rolling lawn south of north parking turn-around as open play area
- Renovate existing south shelter/restroom structure
- On point of land in south portion of park add a lakeshore boardwalk promenade and shelter/pavilion equipped with concession facilities to rent paddleboats and canoes
- Reconfigure open play area in south portion of park
- Reconstruct Nyanza Drive park road to add head-in parking stalls west of the arborvitae allee
- Add new parking area at southeast corner of park
- Construct trail connection across Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way at southwest corner of park
- Construct trail from southeast corner of park eastward along Garfield Ave to connect park and Grinnell Middle School
- Construct numerous walks through interior of park
- Use limestone blocks to construct lake access points at several locations along lakeshore
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- See *Figure 7.7: Miller Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Van Horn Park

- Renovate existing basketball court
- Add a shelter/restroom structure, paved area, and shade trellises north of Spencer Street parking area
- Reopen small stream currently flowing in shallow pipes from southwest portion of park to vicinity of new shelter/restroom structure; regrade stream to resemble a “natural waterway”
- Add numerous, distinctive boundary markers to perimeter of park
- Add sidewalks along street frontages
- Construct walks in the interior of the park
- Add park entrance identity markers and signage
- Construct picnic shelter structure north of new play equipment
- See *Figure 7.8: Van Horn Park Master Plan* in Section 7, which illustrates the above recommendations

Waterworks Park

- Redesign Waterworks Park as a Dog Park
- Classify as a Special Use Park

Greenways

The following describes each of the five proposed Greenway systems in and near Grinnell.

- East Greenway
Located in southeast quadrant of Grinnell along Iowa Interstate RR right-of-way. Begins at Jaycees Park and Grinnell Public Works, extending eastward along Little Bear Creek.

The creek eventually pass through Malcomb and Brooklyn, emptying into Big Bear Creek (a tributary of the Iowa river) west of Victor. The Iowa Interstate RR r.o.w. follows Little Bear Creek east from Jaycees Park in Grinnell to Big Bear Creek, and Big Bear Creek east to the Iowa river at Marengo. This could potentially be a major regional greenway/trail system if the railroad were to agree to a “Rails with Trails” project (see www.railstotrails.org, search “rails with trails”).

- Sugar Creek Greenway System
Located north and west of Grinnell. Consists of Sugar Creek and two tributaries. Sugar Creek begins in the proposed Northeast Neighborhood Park at the north end of Hobart Street; then flows northwest through an open field, crossing the Union Pacific RR r.o.w. and flowing through the north part of the Grinnell Country Club; then crosses 16th Avenue and flows into a pond; then outflows from the pond, flowing west-northwest through the site of the proposed North Neighborhood Park to the Poweshiek-Jasper county line. From there Sugar Creek flows southward, eventually emptying into the North Skunk River near Searsboro. The larger tributary begins at a pond north of 11th Avenue across from Grinnell High School, flowing north and northwest, joining with Sugar Creek east of the Poweshiek-Jasper county line. The small tributary begins in a farm field about a mile north of 16th Avenue and a half-mile west of Ia Hwy 146, flowing west to enter Sugar Creek at 20th Street.
- Hazel Creek Greenway
Located in southwest quadrant of Grinnell along Hazel Creek. Begins at Lions park, flowing south past the Iowa Regional Community College and Grinnell Regional Medical Center, then passes under the Iowa Interstate RR, flowing through Hazelwood Cemetery and Thomazin Park into the north end of Arbor Lake.
- Southwest Greenway System
Located south of the southwest quadrant of Grinnell. Consists of Sweetwater Creek and two tributaries. Sweetwater Creek begins as outflow from Arbor Lake, flowing south and southwest, crossing 20th Street and flowing past the Grinnell sewage treatment plant. The larger tributary begins at Ogan Avenue, flowing south along the east side of Ia Hwy 146, crossing it near Pinder Avenue, then flowing westward to Sweetwater Creek east of 20th Street. The shorter tributary begins in the proposed Southwest Neighborhood Park at 20th Street and future W. Garfield Avenue, flowing southward to Sweetwater Creek.
- Garfield Greenway
Located in southeast quadrant of Grinnell along Hobo Creek. Begins as outflow from Lake Nyanza in Miller Park, flowing westward along the Garfield Avenue r.o.w., crossing Ia Hwy 146 and into the east end of Arbor Lake between Arbor Lake and Miller Parks.

Green Streets

The following details the Green Street network proposed for Grinnell. Each designated Green Street should conform to design guidelines included in a municipal Green Street ordinance recommended by this report for adoption by the City.

New Arterial Green Street: Ia Hwy 146 between Sugar Creek Greenway and Interstate 80

Existing Collector Streets proposed as Neighborhood Green Streets (all are “Collector Streets” identified in the *2004 Grinnell Comprehensive Plan*, except for Broad Street):

- 11th Ave between 20th Street and Park Street
- 10th Ave between Ia Hwy 146 and Penrose Street
- 8th Ave between Sunset Street and Penrose Street
- 4th Ave between Ferguson Rd and Seeland Park residences
- 1st Ave between US Hwy 6 and Summer Street
- Washington Ave between Arbor Lake Park and East Street
- Ogan Ave between Ia Hwy 146 and East Street
- Pinder Ave between Ia Hwy 146
- Sunset Street between 11th Ave and 8th Ave
- Reed Street between 16th Ave and 1st Ave
- Park Street between Grinnell Country Club and Garfield Ave
- East Street between 10th Ave and Pinder Ave
- Penrose Street between 16th Ave and Garfield Ave

Future Collector Streets as Neighborhood Green Streets

- Existing and future 16th Ave between 20th Street and Penrose Street
- Davis Ave between East Street and Penrose Street
- Future W. Garfield Ave between 20th Street and Arbor Lake Park
- Garfield Ave between East Street and Penrose Street
- Future Ogan Ave between 20th Street and Ia Hwy 146
- 20th Street between future 16th Ave and future Ogan Ave
- Ferguson Rd between 380th Ave and 1st Ave
- Hobart Street between future 14th Ave and 10th Ave

Trails

On-Street Bike Routes: Grinnell currently has several designated on-street bike routes, all of them along “Collector Streets” identified in the *2004 Grinnell Comprehensive Plan*. Each of the existing and proposed on-street bike routes, with the exception of 3rd Avenue, is along a proposed Green Street. When these Collector streets are reconfigured as Green Streets, the on-street bike routes should be changed to widened sidewalks to conform with design guidelines in the proposed municipal Green Street ordinance. Where that is not possible, the City should keep existing on-street bike routes, making certain that adequate signage and street markings are in place.

Existing and proposed on-street bike routes along:

- 11th Ave between Summer Street and Park Street
- 10th Ave between Ia Hwy 146 and Penrose Street
- 8th Ave between Summer Street and Penrose Street
- 380th Ave west of US Hwy 6
- 4th Ave between Ferguson Rd and Seeland Park residences east of Penrose Street
- 3rd Ave (to serve Jaycees Park) between East Street and Penrose Street
- 1st Ave between US Hwy 6 and Grinnell Public Works east of East Street
- Washington Ave between Arbor Lake Park and East Street
- Davis Ave between East Street and Penrose Street
- Ferguson Rd between 380th Ave and 1st Ave
- Reed Street between 16th Ave and 1st Ave
- East Street between 10th Ave and Ogan Ave

- Hobart Street between future 14th Ave and 10th Ave
- Penrose Street between 16th Ave and Garfield Ave

Off-Street Recreation Trails: Off-street recreation trails are preferred because they have fewer conflicts with vehicular traffic than on-street trails. Most frequently, off-street trails are located in linear spaces such as greenways. They can also be located in Green Streets rights-of-way, following guidelines that would be established in the proposed municipal Green Streets ordinance.

Off-Street Trails along:

- Future Sugar Creek Greenway between Ia Hwy 146 and Penrose Street
- Existing and future 16th Ave between 20th Street and Penrose Street
- Future W. Garfield Ave between 20th Street and Arbor Lake Park
- East Greenway between Jaycees Park and Penrose Street
- Future Garfield Greenway between Ia Hwy 146 and Miller Park
- Garfield Ave between East Street and Penrose Street
- Existing and future Ogan Ave between 20th Street and East Street
- Future south portion of GART from Ia Hwy 146 westward to Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve in Jasper County (reference: Iowa Trails 2000 Plan)
- 20th Street between 16th Ave and 380th Ave
- 20th Street between 1st Ave and Ogan Ave
- Future trail through Northwest Neighborhood/Community Park between 20th Street and 11th Ave
- Future Hazel Creek Greenway between Lions Park and Arbor Lake Park
- Future Southwest Greenway between Arbor Lake Park and Ogan Ave
- Ia Hwy 146 between future Sugar Creek Greenway and future south portion of GART
- Park St. between Grinnell Country Club and 6th Ave

Two at-grade railroad/trail crossings:

- Across Ia Interstate RR at SW corner of Jaycees Park, as part of East Greenway trails
- Across Union Pacific RR at SW corner of Miller Park, as part of Garfield Greenway trail

Green Streets and Trails Linking Civic Facilities

Implementation of the Green Street and Trail proposals in this report (coupled with recommendations from the 2004 Grinnell Comprehensive Plan to complete the city's sidewalk system) will result in a network of interconnected recreational trails and pedestrian routes throughout the city, linking residents to most of the city's civic facilities. The following presents trail connections and civic facilities along each proposed Green Street. [GS = Green Street]

16th Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Van Horn Park, Grinnell Country Club (private)
- Green Streets and Trails: 20th St GS, South Sugar Creek Greenway trail, Reed St GS, Ia Hwy 146 GS, East Branch Sugar Creek Greenway trail, Penrose St GS

11th Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: GART, Grinnell High School, Merrill Park

- Green Streets and Trails: 20th St GS, GART, Sunset St GS, Reed St GS, Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS

10th Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell College, Ahrens Park
- Green Streets and Trails: Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS, East ST GS, Penrose St GS

8th Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell High School, Lions Park, Family Aquatic Center, Bailey Park, Bailey Park Elementary School, Grinnell College, Fairview elementary School, Ahrens Park
- Green Street and Trails: Bliss St GS, GART, Reed St GS, Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS, East ST GS, Penrose St GS

4th Avenue Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell Regional Medical Center, Spaulding Transportation Museum, Grinnell Public Safety (police and Fire departments), Community Center, Memorial Building, Central Park, Seeland Park senior residences
- Green Streets and Trails: Ferguson Rd GS, Hazel Creek Greenway trail, Reed St GS, Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS, East St GS, Penrose St GS

3rd Ave Bike Route west to east:

- Public Facilities: Jaycees Park
- Green Streets and Trails: East St GS, Summer St bike route, Penrose St GS

1st Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Hazelwood Cemetery, Thomazin Park, Grinnell Public Works
- Green Streets and Trails: 20th St GS, Hazel Creek Greenway Reed St GS, Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS, East St GS, Summer St bike route/trail, East Greenway trail

Washington Ave-Davis Ave Green Streets west to east:

- Public Facilities: Arbor Lake Park, Davis Elementary School, Miller Park
- Green Streets and Trails: Hazelwood Cemetery trail, Ia Hwy I46 GS, Park St GS, East ST GS, Penrose St GS

West Garfield Ave Green Street (proposed):

- Public Facilities: Southwest Neighborhood Park, Arbor Lake Park
- Green Streets and Trails: 20th St GS, Arbor Lake Park trail

Garfield Greenway-Garfield Ave Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Arbor Lake Park, Miller Park, Grinnell Middle School
- Green Streets and Trails: Arbor Lake trail, Ia Hwy I46 South Gateway Entrance and GS, Park St GS, East St GS, Penrose St GS

Ogan Ave (existing and proposed) Green Street west to east:

- Public Facilities: Proposed Regional Recreational Area, Southwest Greenway west and north branches
- Green Streets and Trails: 20th St GS, Southwest Greenway north branch trail, Ia Hwy I46 South Gateway Entrance and GS, Park St GS, East ST GS

Future GART along Stagecoach Rd:

- Public Facilities: Eventual connection to Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, Rock Creek State Park, Kellogg, and Newton
- Green Streets and Trails: Ia Hwy 146 South Gateway Entrance and GS

20th St-Ferguson Rd-20th St Green Streets north to south:

- Public Facilities: Northwest Neighborhood/Community Park, West Neighborhood Park, Southwest Neighborhood Park, Proposed Regional Recreation Area
- Green Streets and Trails: 16th Ave GS, Northwest Neighborhood/Community Park trail, GART/11th Ave GS, 380th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS, West Ave GS (proposed), Ogan Ave GS

Bliss St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell High School
- Green Streets and Trails: 8th Ave GS

Sunset St Green Street and Hazel Creek/Hazelwood Cemetery/Arbor Lake Park/Southwest Greenway trail north to south:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell High School, Lions Park, Iowa Central Community College, Grinnell Regional Medical Center, Hazelwood Cemetery, Thomazin Park, Arbor Lake Park, Potential Regional Recreation Area
- Green Streets and Trails: 11th Ave GS, GART, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS, Washington Ave GS, Arbor Lake Park trail, Ogan Ave GS

Reed St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Van Horn Park (one-half block east), Bailey Park Elementary School, Thomazin Park
- Green Streets and Trails: 16th Ave GS, 11th Ave GS, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS

Ia Hwy 146 Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Merrill Park, Water Works Park, Arbor Lake Park, Grinnell Municipal Airport
- Green Streets and Trails: Sugar Creek Greenway trail, 16th Ave GS, 11th Ave GS, 10th Ave GS, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS, Washington Ave GS/Garfield Greenway trail, Ogan Ave GS, future GART along Stagecoach Rd

Park St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell Country Club (members only), Merrill Park, Grinnell College, future Grinnell Public Library site, Community Center, Central Park, Mayflower Homes senior residences
- Green Streets and Trails: 11th Ave GS, 10th Ave GS, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS, Washington Ave GS/Garfield Greenway trail

East St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Grinnell College, Grinnell Public Works, Miller Park (one-half block west), Grinnell Middle School
- Green Streets and Trails: 10th Ave GS, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 1st Ave GS, Washington Ave GS, Davis Ave GS, Garfield Ave GS, Ogan Ave GS

Summer St Bike Route/Trail north to south:

- Public Facilities: Jaycees Park, Grinnell Public Works
- Green Streets and Trails: 3rd Ave bike route, East Greenway trail, 1st Ave GS

Hobart St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Northeast Neighborhood Park
- Green Streets and Trails: Northeast Greenway trail, 10th Ave GS

Penrose St Green Street north to south:

- Public Facilities: Northeast Neighborhood Park, Ahrens Park, Seeland Park senior residences
- Green Streets and Trails: 16th Ave GS, Northeast Greenway/Northeast Neighborhood park trail, 10th Ave GS, 8th Ave GS, 4th Ave GS, 3rd Ave bike route, East Greenway trail, Davis Ave GS, Garfield Ave GS

PART II: ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan chart on the following page is an extension of the *Master Parks Improvement Plan* recommendations. The chart presents an orderly sequence in which to plan and implement improvements to existing facilities and provide for new facilities, based on priorities established in the Needs Assessment phase of the *Master Parks Improvement Plan* process.

The Action Plan has five recommendation categories: *Policy Recommendations*, *Changes to Existing Parks*, *Recreation Trails*, *Natural Areas*, and *New Parks*. Individual actions within each category are spread out in a 14-year period between 2007 and 2020. With few exceptions, actions recommended for the early years tend to be for existing facilities (parks, greenways, trails, or green streets) within current corporate boundaries. Actions recommended later are typically for future facilities, located outside current corporate boundaries, or both.

The Action Plan is a guide; it is not etched in stone. The recommended order can – and should -- be modified if project funding or scheduling opportunities or obstacles present themselves. The Action Plan should be reviewed periodically and modified as necessary to reflect changing circumstances in the community.

Many of the recommendations may qualify for grants or other funding assistance from public and private sources. Research for these funding sources should be an integral part of each project.

Policy Recommendations are the foundation on which other recommendations are based, and thus are shown very early in the process.

Changes to Existing Parks are listed in the order established by community input, initiated one park per year. Each park master plan design and implementation process should be guided by a Steering Committee composed of neighbors, other interested citizens, park staff, and City officials.

Recreation Trails include existing and proposed on-street bike routes, and off-street trails. Most of the on-street bike routes are along existing or future streets recommended as green streets. Consideration should be given to moving on-street bike routes to widened sidewalks

on the busier green streets. East Street and Penrose Streets may be good examples. Off-street trails that have higher priority are those located within the city that work together to form long, continuous loops, or connect with regional trails.

Natural Areas consist of greenway systems and green streets. Greenways are proposed on existing streams within and outside the current corporate boundaries, with those inside the city given higher priority. Green streets are located along existing and future streets designated in the 2004 Grinnell Comprehensive Plan as arterial or collector routes.

New Parks. Acquisition of new park land was the lowest priority action in the community surveys, and thus is recommended later in the Action Plan. Should the opportunity or need to acquire park land in the vicinity of parks proposed in the *Master Parks Improvement Plan*, however, the Action Plan should be adjusted to reflect that situation.